

## **Special Department Chairs Senate Committee Meeting February 16, 2021**

### **Item #1: HR sponsored Career Day Event**

HR is planning a career day event, likely sometime in April. The career event would include a couple of panels that would provide useful information for all applicants, and department-specific breakout sessions would be held.

Conclusion: Overall, meeting participants were in support of general panels but not the department-specific breakout sessions.

Points raised:

- Access to faculty and department chairs can give candidates false hope in that the candidate thinks attending the event gives them an edge. This is particularly problematic for smaller departments who do not have the opportunity to regularly recruit full-time faculty.
- Holding department-specific sessions, especially in these times, is misleading to the candidates because aside from the seven full-time positions currently being recruited, few (if any) departments are recruiting adjunct faculty because we do not have courses to offer many of our current part-timers.
- There are questions regarding the usefulness of these sessions even when on ground when it comes to recruiting faculty of color. Reaching out to specific organizations and building relationships with local graduate programs seems more beneficial.
- Workshops like the ones organized by HR regarding have also been offered by the FA in the past, so it's important to keep that in mind as an additional resource.
- Perhaps an event that offers more department-specific session is something that should be held in the fall when, hopefully, we have a new list of full-time positions that will be open in the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Because of HR's EEO plan, they may have to hold a general event in the spring, but the previously mentioned idea will be shared with HR.

### **Item #2: Concerns regarding scheduling for Fall and discussions surrounding the return to campus**

There is a larger concern that a lack of planning will lead to last-minute decision-making that puts faculty and students at a health risk when it comes to returning to campus. Departments need to hold conversations surrounding the extent to which faculty want to be back on campus in the fall and the prioritization of what has to be offered on-ground first. In addition, there needs to be scenario planning and further discussion regarding what education looks like post-COVID.

Points raised:

PLANNING NEEDS - FALL SCHEDULE

- The need for a plan when it comes to scheduling that is more decisive.
- Concerns that current events will lead to a last-minute reopening of the campus for Fall, especially if neighboring institutions, such as UCLA, do reopen.
- For classes that are on ground, there is concern about the poor airflow in buildings and the greater exposure facing faculty who teach later in the day.
- Matching the schedule to airflow and surface cleaning needs, including the time allotted for breaks between classes.
- Future temporary considerations for allowing courses to run even if they are below the minimum of 18 students.
- Concern regarding the continual lowering of WTH allocations.

#### PLANNING NEEDS - RETURN TO CAMPUS

- Emphasis on scenario planning (e.g., if SMC is at this level, then we can do this).
- There is research that supports schools reopening though some faculty commented that many of the studies are K-8 specific.
- The research shows that students of color and those who lack resources are suffering the most in this COVID climate.
- The concern regarding in-person services and the ability for library services and counseling to offer these services fully in-person because of cleanliness issues, number of people who would seek these services that would limit the ability to social distance, regularly clean. This places students' health (and their loved ones at home) in danger.
- Major concerns regarding campus cleanliness since custodial and operations are not working a full work-week.
- It is important for chairs to facilitate departmental decisions regarding what is needed for the return to campus, including which courses should be on ground first. Administrators who are making these decisions should be speaking directly to chairs about what the plan looks like, which is contradictory to what is currently happening. There needs to be more transparency.
- The need for data collection as far as how many students are going to feel like they can come back in the fall so we can make better decisions about how many classes should actually be on ground.
- We don't have answers for many of the questions faculty are raising, and there is a spectrum of needs that must be met for many faculty to feel comfortable returning to campus.
- The reality is that it is imperative for certain departments to return to campus because of the hands-on nature of their fields.
- The return to campus will include smaller class sizes, and there is a concern that the current class caps coupled with the need to teach smaller clusters of students will lead to an increased workload (one that has already been increased by teaching online).
- The technology needed to equip classrooms for recording professor lectures.
- The quality of learning from a recorded lecture is discipline-specific. For example, it's better for students to learn about art history on Zoom than watching a professor lecture in an empty classroom.

- Concerns surrounding the reality of a hyperflex class and in certain situations the need for a camera person in the room to create an effective recording.

#### FUTURE OF THE SMC EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- The future includes a robust online program for the classes that can be taught effectively in an online platform.
- Education in a post-Covid world will not look the same. Our students having seen what less commuting and flexibility has offered them will not make the same choices regarding classes and schedules.
- The importance of professional development that anticipates the future of education.
- Our competitors are now in the DE business, so the competition is going to be fierce, and whether it's hyper FLEX or other models it is this new playing field, and we cannot operate in a vacuum.
- Use of several key resolutions this semester to clarify our position.

#### LINKS TO DOCUMENTS MENTIONED IN CHAT

- [SMC's Roadmap to Recovery](#)
- Situation Report from Johnnie Adams (not currently hyperlinked - see the email from Nate Donahue on February 16).
- ["The HyFlex Option for Instruction if Campuses Open This Fall"](#)